



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Deputy Under Secretary for
Ocean and Atmosphere
Washington, D.C. 20230

NOV 16 2001

Dear Reviewer:

In accordance with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), we enclose for your review the Steller Sea Lion Protection Measures Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).

This final SEIS is prepared pursuant to NEPA to assess the environmental impacts associated with modifying the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska pollock, Pacific cod and Atka mackerel fisheries such that the reconfigured fisheries do not jeopardize the continued existence of Steller sea lions or adversely modify their critical habitat. The secondary purpose of this action is to modify the fisheries such that the reconfigured fisheries minimize the economic and social costs that will be imposed on the commercial fishing industry and associated coastal communities.

Any written comments on the final SEIS should be directed to James W. Balsiger, Regional Administrator, Alaska Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, P.O. Box 21688, Juneau, AK 99802-1668 by December 24, 2001. A copy of your comments should also go to the Office of Policy & Strategic Planning, HCHB Room 6117, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230.

NOAA is not required to respond to comments received as a result of issuance of the FSEIS, however, comments will be reviewed and considered for their impact on the issuance of a record of decision (ROD). The ROD will be printed in the Federal Register some time before December 31, 2001.

Sincerely,

for Margaret R. McCall
Scott B. Gudes
Acting Under Secretary for Oceans
and Atmosphere/Administrator
and Deputy Under Secretary

Enclosure

